

CALIFORNIA

EARLY START



With Early Start... We make a difference

The Need for Early Intervention

- ▶ Each year more than 500,000 babies are born in California.
- ▶ It is estimated that 2% of California's newborns may be at risk of or demonstrate developmental delays or disabilities.
- ▶ Research shows that early intervention substantially reduces and often prevents decline in the intellectual, physical, communicative, adaptive and emotional development of children at risk and with disabilities (Guralnick, 1998).
- ▶ Federal and State law require that early intervention services are provided to eligible infants and toddlers from birth through 36 months and their families (20 U.S.C., §1431 et seq., G.C. Title 14, §95000 et seq.).

The Demand for Early Intervention

- ▶ California Early Start now serves more than 42,000 children under the age of 3 each year (DDS 2004).
- ▶ California Early Start grew an average of 5.7% each year for the last 10 years (DDS 2004).
- ▶ Early Start Family Resource Centers provide parent-to-parent support to the families of children eligible for Early Start.

Early Intervention is Effective

- ▶ Years of research on the effectiveness of intervention has shown conclusively that early intervention is effective (Wolery & Bailey, 2003; Guralnick, 1997).
- ▶ Specialized services and supports, such as physical therapy, speech and language therapy, special instruction, home visits, family support, and service coordination, increase the chances a child will develop to his or her full potential (*Zero to Three Policy Brief*, February 2003).
- ▶ In the absence of formal intervention, there is a general decline in performance on developmental measures for children with a variety of cognitive abilities, such as Down Syndrome, across the first five years of life (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000).
- ▶ When eligible children do not receive early intervention services, they and their families, as well as society in general, bear the consequences (Osner & Cohen, 2003).

Early Intervention Saves Money

- ▶ Research has shown that early intervention with young children, from birth to age 5, with disabilities or who are at risk for developmental difficulties, benefits both children and families and assures long-term cost savings to both local educational agencies and society (National Association of School Psychologists, 2003).



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Overview

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With Early Start... We make a difference

Early Start is California's system of early intervention services provided to infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. It is a multiagency effort by the Department of Developmental Services and the California Department of Education that encourages partnerships between families and professionals, family support, and coordination of services. The statewide system of early intervention services is available throughout California and can be accessed through regional centers for developmental disabilities, county offices of education, local school districts, health or social service agencies, and family resource centers/networks in your community.

An important part of Early Start is the network of family resource centers (FRCs) that provide parent-to-parent contact, information about disabilities and early intervention, and assistance in accessing services. Phone contact, home or hospital visits, and support groups are all ways in which families might connect with experienced, knowledgeable parent "peers" through their local FRC.

What are early intervention services?

Early intervention services are provided based on the developmental needs of the child, the concerns and priorities of the family, and the resources available to them. Services are provided within the context of the child and family's daily activities and routines. Eligible children and families may receive a variety of early intervention services; some children may need only one or two early intervention services. Early intervention services may include

- ▶ assistive technology, including devices or services
- ▶ audiology or hearing services
- ▶ family training, counseling, and home visits
- ▶ health services necessary for a child to benefit from other early intervention services
- ▶ medical services for diagnosis and evaluation only
- ▶ nursing services
- ▶ nutrition services
- ▶ occupational therapy
- ▶ physical therapy
- ▶ psychological services
- ▶ respite services
- ▶ service coordination (case management)
- ▶ social work services
- ▶ special instruction
- ▶ speech and language services
- ▶ transportation and related costs necessary for a child to receive services
- ▶ vision services



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Who is eligible?

Infants and toddlers from birth up to 36 months may be eligible for early intervention services if, through documented evaluation and assessment, they meet one of the criteria listed below:

1. have a developmental delay in either cognitive, communication, social or emotional, adaptive, or physical and motor development including vision and hearing; or
2. have established risk conditions of known etiology with a high probability of resulting in delayed development; or
3. are at high risk of having a substantial developmental disability due to a combination of risk factors.

Who provides services and supports?

Early intervention services are individually determined for each eligible infant or toddler and are provided, purchased, or arranged by a regional center or local education agency. Local education agencies are primarily responsible for services for infants with vision, hearing, and severe orthopedic impairments, including any combination of these solely low incidence disabilities. Regional centers are responsible for services for all other children eligible for Early Start. Family resource centers that receive Early Start funding provide parent-to-parent support, information, and referral for all families.

How much does it cost?

Early Start services are provided at no cost to eligible families. Early Start is funded by State and Federal funds. Other publicly funded services may also be used. Private insurance is another resource that may be used to fund an early intervention service if the family will not incur a financial cost or loss of coverage of benefits. Use of private insurance is voluntary and requires the family's informed consent.

Are other services available?

Yes. The Departments of Health Services, Mental Health, Social Services, and Alcohol and Drug Programs are State agencies that provide services and resources that may be of benefit to children and their families. Each agency determines eligibility for the services that it provides.

Does early intervention make a difference?

Years of research on the effectiveness of intervention has shown conclusively that early intervention is effective (Wolery & Bailey, 2003; Guralnick, 1997). Specialized services and supports, such as physical therapy, speech and language therapy, special instruction, home visits, family support, and service coordination, increase the chances a child will develop to his or her full potential (*Zero to Three Policy Brief*, February 2003).

How do I get more information?

Visit DDS' Early Start website at www.dds.ca.gov/earlystart or call 800/515-BABY for resource information and referral to local regional centers, education agencies, and family resource centers.



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Federal & State Law

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California has a long history of providing early intervention services under prior State statutes and regulations. Infant services in public schools were started in the 1960s and 1970s using a variety of local, state, and federal funding sources. California state law, since 1980, has mandated early education programs for many infants and toddlers with disabilities. Additionally, the State administration has supported preventive and early intervention services for infants at risk for many years viewing it as a major investment in the future of California's children.

FEDERAL LAW

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part C

California's Early Start system of early intervention services was enhanced in response to federal legislation authorizing states to maintain and implement statewide interagency systems of early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. The Early Intervention Program for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities was enacted in 1986 under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA; 20 U.S.C., §1431 et seq.). Federal regulations pertaining to the Part C program are found in 34 CFR, Part 303.1-303.654.

STATE LAW

California Early Intervention Services Act

After six years of state and local interagency planning and coordination, the State Legislature passed the California Early Intervention Services Act in 1993 (CEISA; 14 G.C., §95000 et seq.). CEISA established state authority to expand California's early intervention service system to meet federal requirements. The California Department of Developmental Services (DDS), as the Part C lead agency, plans, develops, implements, and monitors the statewide early intervention service system in collaboration with the California Department of Education (CDE) and with advice and assistance from the State Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) on Early Intervention. The Departments of Health, Social Services, Mental Health, and Alcohol and Drug Programs cooperate and coordinate with DDS and CDE in the delivery of services to children under the age of 3 and their families.

CEISA was amended in 1997 to acknowledge the provision of family support services by Early Start family resource centers such as parent-to-parent support, information dissemination and referral, public awareness, family-professional collaboration activities, and transition assistance for families.

In July 1997, the California Legislature requested that DDS convene a workgroup to examine relevant information and to develop recommendations related to the impact of implementing federal regulations under IDEA, Part C. Based on the Workgroup's recommendations, CEISA was amended in 1998 to address state coordination and collaboration with families and communities, service coordinator competencies and caseloads, evaluation and assessment, parents' rights, monitoring, and referral to local Early Start family resource centers.

A major milestone for Early Start occurred in 1999. California's original legislative agreement for implementation of the Part C program provided for a date when the program would cease to exist or "sunset." That date was eliminated in the 1999 legislative session when the Legislature conferred permanent status to Early Start.

State regulations pertaining to Early Start are found in Title 17, CCR, §§52000-52175.



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Facts at a Glance

ICC

Interagency Coordinating
Council on Early Intervention

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MISSION STATEMENT

**The mission of the ICC
is to promote and
enhance a coordinated
family service system
for infants and toddlers,
birth to 36 months
who have or are at risk
of having a disability,
and their families,
utilizing and encouraging
a family-centered approach,
family-professional
partnerships,
and interagency
collaboration.**



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The State Interagency Coordinating Council on Early Intervention (ICC) assists and advises the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) concerning the statewide system of early intervention services and assists DDS in achieving the full participation, cooperation, and coordination of appropriate public agencies that serve young children and their families. The ICC also serves as a forum for public input from parents, service providers, service coordinators, and others about federal, State, or local policies that support the timely delivery of appropriate early intervention services.

ICC members are appointed by the Governor. The council is comprised of parents of children with disabilities, early intervention service providers, health care professionals, state agency representatives, and others interested in early intervention. In addition, the ICC Chair may appoint additional community representatives to provide increased participation of parents, providers, and other interested parties. The ICC meets at least quarterly.

For a complete list of ICC members, please visit www.dds.ca.gov/earlystart.

Committees of the ICC

Family Resources and Supports Committee

Advises and assists the ICC regarding support to families who have young children with disabilities.

Integrated Services and Health Committee

Advises the ICC in the area of health in order to ensure access to, and delivery of, comprehensive health services to children eligible for Early Start.

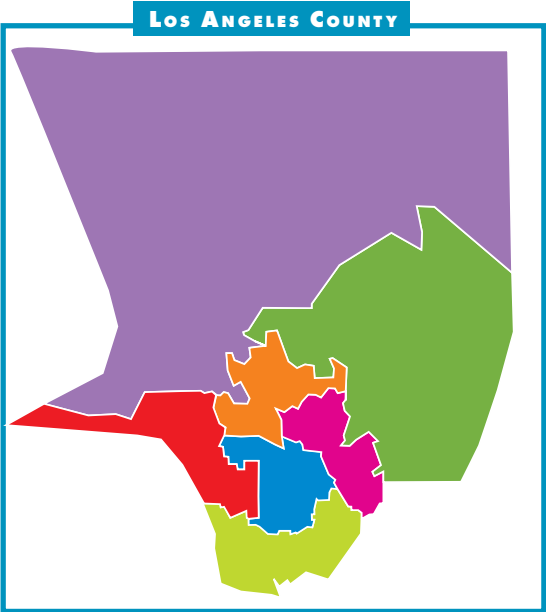
Quality Service Delivery Systems Committee

Advises the ICC regarding quality assurance, including personnel and program standards.

Public Awareness Committee

Advises the ICC on public awareness activities that coordinate, support, and promote California Early Start.

Regional Centers by County



ANTELOPE VALLEY REGIONAL CENTER

Main Office: Van Nuys
Field Offices: Antelope, Santa Clarita Valley

WESTSIDE REGIONAL CENTER

Main Office: Culver City

FRANK D. LANTERMAN REGIONAL CENTER

Main Office: Los Angeles

SAN GABRIEL/POMONA REGIONAL CENTER

Main Office: Pomona

EASTERN LOS ANGELES REGIONAL CENTER

Main Office: Alhambra
Field Office: Whittier

SOUTH CENTRAL LOS ANGELES REGIONAL CENTER

Main Office: Los Angeles

HARBOR REGIONAL CENTER

Main Office: Torrance

Facts at a Glance

Regional Centers

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Infants and toddlers, from birth up to 36 months, at risk of or with developmental delays or disabilities may be eligible to receive services through California’s 21 community-based regional centers. The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) contracts with non-profit corporations that operate regional centers.

Regional centers are the single point of entry into the service system that serves people with developmental disabilities across all ages. Regional centers provide intake, evaluation, and assessment to determine eligibility and service needs. They also provide service coordination, advocacy, information, referral, and an array of other services to eligible infants and toddlers and their families.

Early intervention services are provided, purchased, or arranged by regional centers based on the unique needs of the child and family. Early intervention services that are not available through other publicly funded agencies are generally purchased from community service providers who are “vendored” by the regional center. In specific communities, some regional centers contract with local education agencies (LEAs) to provide special instruction and other related early intervention services through their early childhood special education programs to children served by regional centers.

Regional centers coordinate with LEAs and other local agencies and organizations in evaluation, assessment, development of individualized family service plans and service provision. For children who are dually served by a regional center and an LEA, basic special education and related services are usually provided by the LEA. Either LEAs or regional centers may be designated to provide service coordination. The regional center may also provide additional early intervention services or other available State services based on the needs of the child and family.



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Regional Centers by County



For more information,
please refer to the *Central
Directory of Early Intervention
Resources* located at
www.dds.ca.gov/earlystart
or call 800/837-4337.

Special Education Local Plan Areas (SELPAs) by County

INDIVIDUAL COUNTIES SERVED BY MORE THAN ONE SELPA

ALAMEDA
Mid-Alameda County SELPA
Mission Valley SELPA
North Region SELPA
Oakland Unified SELPA
Tri-Valley SELPA (*Dublin, Livermore, and Pleasanton*)

CONTRA COSTA
Contra Costa SELPA
Mt. Diablo Unified SELPA
West Contra Costa Unified SELPA

EL DORADO
El Dorado County SELPA
Tahoe-Alpine County SELPA

FRESNO
Clovis Unified SELPA
Fresno County SELPA
Fresno Unified SELPA

KERN
Bakersfield City SELPA
Kern County Consortium SELPA

LOS ANGELES
Antelope Valley SELPA
Downey-Montebello SELPA
East San Gabriel Valley SELPA
Foothill SELPA
Long Beach Unified SELPA
Los Angeles County SELPA
Los Angeles Unified SELPA
Mid-Cities Service Area SELPA
Norwalk-La Mirada/ABC SELPA
Paramount Annex SELPA
Pasadena Unified SELPA
Santa Clarita Service Area SELPA
Southwest SELPA
Tri-City SELPA (*Beverly Hills, Culver City, and Santa Monica*)
Ventura Couny SELPA
West San Gabriel Valley SELPA
Whittier Area Cooperative SELPA

ORANGE
Anaheim City SELPA
Garden Grove Unified SELPA
Greater Anaheim SELPA
Irvine Unified SELPA
Newport-Mesa Unified SELPA
North Orange County SELPA
Northeast Orange County SELPA
Orange Unified SELPA
Santa Ana Unified SELPA
South Orange County SELPA
Tustin Unified SELPA
West Orange County Consortium for Special Education

RIVERSIDE
Corona-Norco Unified SELPA
Moreno Valley Unified SELPA
Riverside County SELPA
Riverside Unified SELPA

SACRAMENTO
Elk Grove Unified SELPA
Sacramento City Unified School District, Special Education Department
Sacramento County SELPA
San Juan Unified SELPA

SAN BERNARDINO
Children's Learning Center SELPA (*San Bernardino County*)
Desert/Mountain SELPA
Fontana Unified SELPA
Morongo Unified School District SELPA
San Bernardino City Unified SELPA
West End SELPA

SAN DIEGO
Poway Unified SELPA
San Diego City Unified SELPA
San Diego East County SELPA
San Diego North Coastal Consortium SELPA
San Diego North Inland SELPA
San Diego South County SELPA

SAN JOAQUIN
Lodi Unified SELPA
San Joaquin County SELPA
Stockton City Unified SELPA

SANTA CRUZ
North Santa Cruz County SELPA
Pajaro Valley Unified SELPA

SOLANO
Solano County SELPA
Vallejo City Unified School District SELPA

STANISLAUS
Modesto City SELPA
Stanislaus County SELPA

YUBA
Sutter County SELPA
Yuba County SELPA

Facts at a Glance

SELPAs
Special Education
Local Plan Areas

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Infants and toddlers who have vision, hearing, and severe orthopedic impairments (or a combination of these disabilities) receive individually designed early intervention services from local education agencies (LEAs) such as school districts and county offices of education. Across the state, special education local plan area (SELPA) administrators coordinate early childhood special education programs, which include early intervention services.

Since 1980, state law included a partial requirement for early education programs to serve the number of infants and toddlers with disabilities that they served in 1980-81. LEAs also provide services to a number of additional children with multiple disabilities under the age of 3 in order to continue to qualify for their current level of state funding.

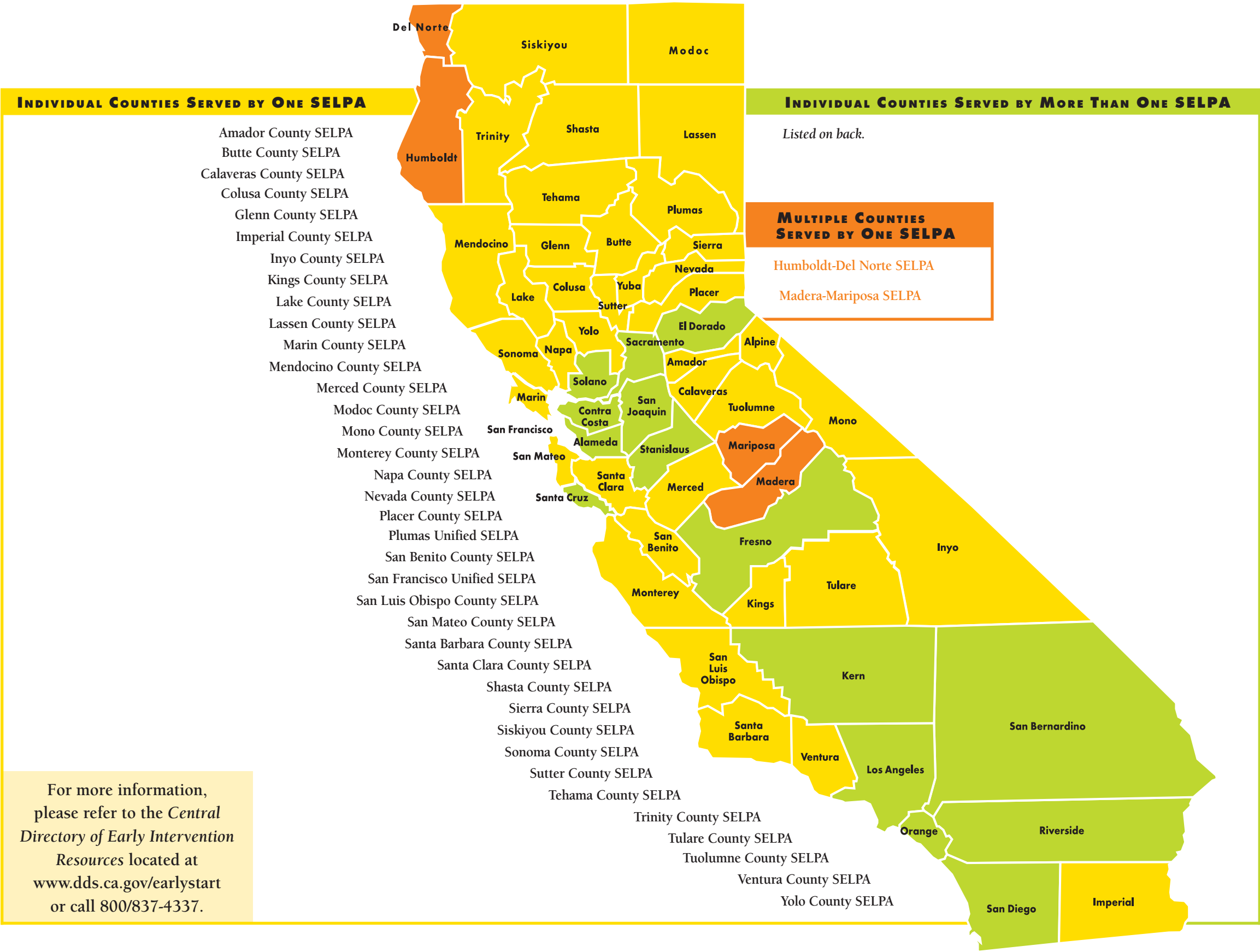
LEAs provide early intervention services including special instruction, service coordination, family support and other early intervention services identified in the child's individualized family service plan (IFSP). LEAs also coordinate with regional centers and other local agencies and organizations in evaluation, assessment, and development of IFSPs.

For children who are dually served by a regional center and an LEA, basic special education and related services are usually provided by the LEA. Either LEAs or regional centers may be designated to provide service coordination. The regional center may also provide additional early intervention services or other available State services based on the needs of the child and the family.

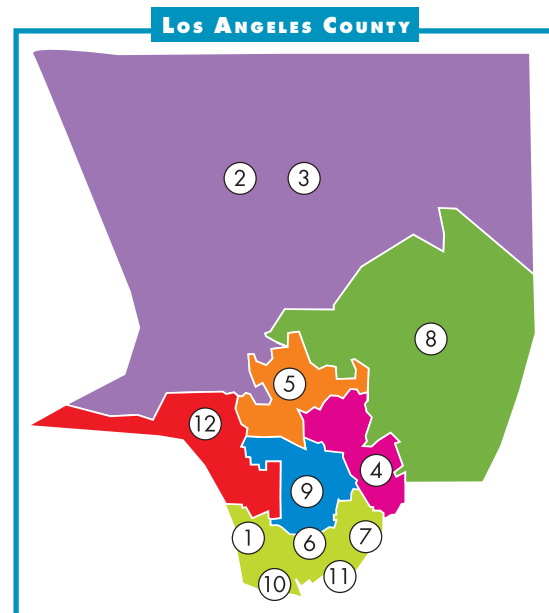


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Special Education Local Plan Areas (SELPAs) by County



Family Resource Centers by County



- ① Carolyn Kordich Family Resource Center (Carson, Harbor City, Harbor Gateway, Lomita, San Pedro, and Wilmington)
- ② Family Focus Resource Center (San Fernando Valley, excluding Glendale and Burbank)
- ③ Family Focus Resource Center Antelope Valley (Antelope Valley, San Fernando Valley, and Santa Clarita Valley, excluding Glendale and Burbank)
- ④ Family Resource Library and Assistive Technology Center (Alhambra, Boyle Heights, City of Commerce, City Terrace, East Los Angeles, East Whittier, La Mirada, Lincoln Heights, Montebello, Monterey Park, Pico Rivera, Rosemead, San Gabriel, San Marino, Santa Fe Springs, South Pasadena, Temple City, and Whittier)
- ⑤ Frank D. Lanterman Regional Center/Koch-Young Family Resource Center (Burbank, Central Los Angeles, Eagle Rock, Glendale, Hollywood/Wilshire, La Cañada, La Crescenta, Loz Feliz, and Pasadena)
- ⑥ Harbor Regional Center Resource Center (Artesia, Carson, Cerritos, Harbor City, Harbor Gateway, Hawaiian Gardens, Hermosa Beach, Lakewood, Lomita, Long Beach, Manhattan Beach, Norwalk, Palos Verdes, Portuguese Bend, Rancho Palos Verdes Estates, Redondo Beach, Rolling Hills Estates, San Pedro, Santa Catalina Island, Torrance, Welteria, and Wilmington)
- ⑦ Long Beach Family Resource Center (Lakewood, Long Beach, and Signal Hill)
- ⑧ The Parents' Place (Altadena, Arcadia, Azusa, Baldwin Park, Bradbury, City of Industry, Claremont, Covina, Diamond Bar, Duarte, El Monte, Glendora, Hacienda Heights, La Puente, La Verne, Monrovia, Pomona, Rowland Heights, San Dimas, Sierra Madre, South El Monte, Temple City, Valinda, Walnut, and West Covina)
- ⑨ South Central Los Angeles Resource Center (SCLARC) (Carson, Compton, Dominguez Hills, Lynwood, Paramount, South Central Los Angeles, Southeast Los Angeles, and Southwest Los Angeles)
- ⑩ Southeast Family Resource Center (Artesia, Bellflower, Cerritos, Hawaiian Gardens, Lakewood, and Norwalk)
- ⑪ Southwest Special Education Family Resource Center (El Segundo, Hawthorne, Hermosa Beach, Inglewood, Lawndale, Lennox, Manhattan Beach, Palos Verdes, Redondo Beach, Rolling Hills, and Torrance)
- ⑫ Westside Family Resource Center (Beverly Hills, Brentwood, Culver City, El Segundo, Gardena, Inglewood, Lawndale, Malibu, Pacific Palisades, Santa Monica, Venice, West Los Angeles, Westchester)

Facts at a Glance

FRCs
Family Resource Centers

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Families of infants and toddlers, from birth up to 36 months at risk of or with developmental delays and disabilities, can receive parent-to-parent support from family resource centers. Family resource centers receiving Early Start funding actively collaborate with local regional centers and educational agencies and help many parents, families, and children access early intervention services.

California's Early Start family resource centers (FRCs) are staffed by parents who have children with special needs and provide information and parent-to-parent support. Each FRC is unique, reflecting the needs of their community. They may operate as independent sites or be based in regional centers, local education agencies, public health facilities, hospitals, or homes. Services are available in many languages and are culturally responsive to the needs of the individual family.

FRCs contracted by the California Department of Developmental Service may provide:

- ▶ parent-to-parent and family support
- ▶ peer counseling and home visits
- ▶ information and referral
- ▶ public awareness
- ▶ parent education
- ▶ support services in many languages
- ▶ transition assistance
- ▶ support services in urban and rural communities

In addition, several FRCs have newsletters, resource libraries, and websites, as well as parent and/or sibling support groups and telephone "warmlines" or "babylines."

Visit the Family Resource Centers Network of California (FRCNCA) website at www.frcnca.org for more information.



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California Early Start for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families is an interagency system of coordinated early intervention services administered by the Department of Developmental Services in collaboration with the California Department of Education.

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Family Resource Centers by County



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please refer to the *Central
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or call 800/837-4337.



With Early Start... We make a difference

Early Start was implemented in 1993 under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to enhance and coordinate quality early intervention services for eligible infants and toddlers (birth to 3 years of age) and their families in California. The delivery of quality early intervention services envisioned by IDEA requires that personnel are qualified and appropriately trained to provide those services to eligible infants, young children, and their families.

Early Start's Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) provides the framework for coordinating the delivery of personnel development activities throughout California. Preservice preparation, inservice training, and technical assistance are essential CSPD components delivered at the state and local level through a variety of personnel development activities. Needs assessments, recruitment and retention, and evaluation of CSPD efforts are additional elements of Early Start's system of personnel development.

The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) contracts with the California Early Intervention Technical Assistance Network (CEITAN) and Early Start Resources (ESR), projects of the WestEd Center for Prevention and Early Intervention, for CSPD and public awareness activities. Under the direction of DDS, CEITAN facilitates the implementation of Early Start's statewide CSPD and provides institutes, training, and technical assistance to agencies and programs regarding Early Start. ESR provides technical assistance by disseminating Early Start materials and other resources statewide from the early intervention library, which houses a collection of more than 4,000 resources.

For more information, visit the DDS Early Start website at www.dds.ca.gov/earlystart or call 800/869-4337 for information about CEITAN and ESR.



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Child Find & Public Awareness

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Early Start has a comprehensive interagency child find system that ensures all infants and toddlers who may be eligible for early intervention services are located, identified, and referred to the appropriate agency for evaluation for services. Child find activities are conducted at the state level by the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and at the local level by regional centers, Early Start Family Resource Centers, and local education agencies.

Public awareness activities promote child find by focusing on early identification and timely referrals. Early Start has a variety of materials and products to support child find, public awareness, and outreach. These materials ensure appropriate referrals, increase the community's knowledge and understanding of early intervention services, and support the families' role in early intervention.

Early Start family resource centers (FRCs) participate in public awareness activities that include community outreach, information dissemination, and referral. FRCs also assist families with how to access the early intervention service system.

Early Start Resources (ESR), a WestEd Center for Prevention and Early Intervention project, under contract with DDS, facilitates implementation of Early Start's public awareness activities including targeted outreach to hard-to-reach populations. At the direction of DDS, ESR produces and disseminates a variety of public awareness materials and products that promote Early Start such as the *Early Start Central Directory of Early Intervention Resources*. Multilingual materials are also available.

For more information, visit DDS' Early Start website at www.dds.ca.gov/earlystart, or call Early Start Resources at 800/869-4337 for free product information, including multilingual resources, on early intervention.



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